



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

RECENT BOOKS ON PREACHING AND PREACHERS

EDWARD HALE

CHESTNUT HILL, MASSACHUSETTS

The books that have been written on the preparation and delivery of sermons are usually more helpful to ministers of some experience than to the students in divinity schools for whose instruction they were first of all intended. The man who is already a preacher, and who is also open-minded and willing to learn, sifts out from the detail of the numerous divisions and subdivisions of such books much that is suggestive and stimulating; his own experience interprets the precepts and warnings that are given, confirms their wisdom, and brings home their application. To the average student, on the other hand, the elaborate analysis easily becomes confusing; the sermon is made to appear a thing highly technical, if not artificial, and, in spite of any protest to the contrary which the book may contain, an end in itself instead of the means to an end. Learning to preach is like learning to do anything else. The rules for the beginner must be few and simple, and refinement and enrichment of method must come as part of the preacher's general growth, and with the gain in confidence and freedom which should naturally result from the continued practice of his calling. Many students would find it easier to begin to preach, and many preachers would be more effective, if they could understand from the first that the rules which govern the method of the sermon differ in no way from those of any other form of persuasive public speech.

Dr. Breed's *Preparing to Preach*¹ illustrates both the defects and the merits of these books. There is much that is wholesome throughout, the chapters on extemporaneous preaching are exceptionally definite in analysis and helpful in advice, and nothing could be better of its kind than the frank, pithy counsel of the chapter on pulpit manners. But one wishes that the four hundred and fifty pages had been condensed at least one-third, that

¹ *Preparing to Preach*, by David R. Breed, D.D., Professor of Homiletics in Western Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, Pa. George H. Doran Company, 1911.

the preparation for the delivery of the sermon had been treated on broader lines, and that the writer had abstained from any part in perpetuating the artificial classification of sermons as "narrative," "doctrinal," "expository," and the rest.

Professor Hoyt also lends his authority to this kind of classification in his book on *The Preacher*.² But there is a quality in this book, as in Professor Hoyt's earlier book on preaching,³ which disarms criticism of such formalism as he retains. Both books so overflow with the new wine of a warm, earnest personality, seeking and calling forth all that is most personal and living in those to whom the writer addresses himself, that the old bottles which are made to do duty become comparatively unimportant. "Christianity is a life; it can only be propagated by personal influence"; the "homiletic habit" is "the power to see and use truth for public speech"; "you must preach to yourself before you can preach to others": these sentences, taken almost at random from the earlier book, are characteristic of the spirit in which both books are written. They can hardly fail to accomplish the avowed purpose, "to help the preacher speak with authority, touch the conscience and form the moral habits of the age, and make his work educative of the abundant life."

Dr. Dykes also writes on the preparation of the sermon, though more concisely, in the third part of *The Christian Minister and his Duties*.⁴ The style of the book is dry, and the treatment of the conduct of worship is so largely historical and descriptive that those who turn to it for practical suggestion may be disappointed. But, in what is said of the call to the ministry, those who are doubting whether they should or should not be ministers will find clear-cut answers to many of their questions; and the chapters on the minister's devotional life, his character, and his citizenship, contain much that is at once searching and stimulating.

² *The Preacher, his Person, Message, and Method. A Book for the Classroom and Study.* By Arthur S. Hoyt, Professor of Homiletics and Sociology in the Auburn Theological Seminary. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1909.

³ *The Work of Preaching.* The Macmillan Company, 1905.

⁴ *The Christian Minister and his Duties*, by J. Oswald Dykes, M.A., D.D., Principal Emeritus of Westminster College, Cambridge. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909.

Nearly every teacher of homiletics advises students to inform themselves in regard to the lives and methods of great preachers. The advice is good if the student is not led into formal imitation, but reads to catch the spirit of the preacher. As a rule one's own direct resort to original sources is more satisfying, in such study, than any knowledge at second hand, in which one must depend on the judgment of another for selection and criticism. But the competent summary or review has its value in so far as it invites to a first acquaintance which might not be had otherwise. The collection of such summaries which Professor Brastow published in 1904⁵ needs no word of appreciation at this late day for its just and sympathetic estimate of the life and work of the eight or nine spiritual leaders whom it describes. The same catholicity and discernment characterize Professor Brastow's later book, *The Modern Pulpit*,⁶ and have made it especially instructive to those who wish to compare the preaching of the different Protestant denominations, and their work in general, and to see just what contribution each is making toward the larger and deeper spiritual life of the present time. The book must already have helped much toward a fuller mutual understanding and a more intelligent and sympathetic toleration among the denominations. The form of both volumes is attractive, but any future edition of *Representative Modern Preachers* would be more convenient for reference if the running titles of the chapters were to include the name of the preacher who is the subject of the essay.

There is a class of books the aim of which is not so much to instruct the minister as to quicken his spiritual life, or to reassure him in the face of the difficulties which the student foresees and which the settled minister has experienced. Professor Robertson has undertaken to do this in *The Glory of the Ministry*,⁷ a study

⁵ *Representative Modern Preachers*, by Lewis O. Brastow, D.D., Professor of Practical Theology in Yale University. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1904.

⁶ *The Modern Pulpit. A Study of Homiletic Sources and Characteristics*. The Macmillan Company, 1906.

⁷ *The Glory of the Ministry. Paul's Exultation in Preaching*, by A. T. Robertson, M.A., D.D., Professor of New Testament Interpretation in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. Fleming H. Revell Company, 1911.

of Paul's triumph over the discouragements which met him as a preacher. The friendly candor of Dr. Robertson's preface makes one reluctant to criticise, but it is to be regretted that he did not allow himself more freedom from the exegetical method of the class-room. The very numerous references in the page and in the foot-notes make the book helpful as a commentary, but they make still more difficult the attempt to follow a sequence of thought, already far too much broken in the slow progress of the exegesis. *The Minister and the Spiritual Life*,⁸ as indicated by its title, is another of the books intended to stimulate rather than to instruct. All who know anything of Dr. Gunsaulus will realize how much these Yale lectures of 1911 must have gained from his personality in the actual delivery. In print the uniform richness of illustration and figure which characterizes the style becomes burdensome, and the reader longs for an occasional thought more simply expressed. The main thesis, however, the need of spiritual vision in the church and of spiritual life in its leaders, is presented with sufficient clearness and force, and there is much that is stirring in the study of the various channels through which the spiritual life either is enriched or makes itself effective. At times, as in the discussion of the subliminal and subconscious in personal salvation, one feels on rather uncertain ground, and the sense in which Dr. Gunsaulus uses the term "orthodoxy" seems strained. But the vigor with which he declares that a great society becomes possible only as the individuals who compose it are worthy, is most timely in view of the readiness with which the opposite theory now often finds acceptance. In reading *The Theology of a Preacher*⁹ one does not have to agree with Mr. Hough in his belief, or even in his point of view, in order to feel the contagion of his sincerity and enthusiasm. It is from the revelations of the spiritual in the material, the divine in the human, that the preacher is to construct his theology, and these he finds as he goes about his work and comes into daily contact with men. His belief in God, the special form which this belief is to take, the corollaries which

⁸ *The Minister and the Spiritual Life*, by Frank W. Gunsaulus, D.D., LL.D., Minister of Central Church, Chicago. Fleming H. Revell Company, 1911.

⁹ *The Theology of a Preacher*, by Lynn Harold Hough. New York: Eaton & Mains, 1912.

result from it, all become clear and assured as he responds with real consecration to the demands made upon him by the duties of his calling. Mr. Hough's theory is new only in the sense that he has discovered it for himself, but the ardor with which he makes, as it were, the confession of his own experience, and seeks to give to others the key to the satisfaction which he has found, is most quickening. The very human and at the same time very spiritual quality of the book will constitute for most readers its chief value, but from time to time there is some especially suggestive thought, as in the brief passage on free will. The chapter on the place of Jesus in the theology of the preacher probably will be helpful to many, but some will find a broader and at the same time deeper interpretation in what Dr. Gunsaulus says on the same subject, an interpretation which Mr. Hough himself presents indirectly in his chapter on "The Great Companionship."

To student and settled minister alike, and perhaps most of all to the man who is hesitating whether to enter the ministry, nothing is more helpful than a reasonable assurance that there is not only a place, but a demand for what the minister can do for the interpretation and development of men's lives under present conditions. In *The Church of To-Day* and *The Church of Tomorrow*¹⁰ Dr. Crooker reviews these conditions frankly, with full recognition of the difficulties which they present; while in his conviction that the church must be the chief source and instrument of those forces which are to meet the difficulties, and preserve to both present and future all that makes life really worth living, he makes very plain the opportunity which the ministry offers for the exercise of a man's best powers. Of the two books, *The Church of Tomorrow* is the more critical in tone, and to some extent the more theoretical. Partly on this account and partly because of a certain repetition in the discussion, which Dr. Crooker himself recognizes, it is not likely to make so strong an appeal as the earlier book.

The little volume entitled *Scientific Management in the Churches*¹¹

¹⁰ *The Church of To-Day. A Plea*, by Joseph Henry Crooker. Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1908. *The Church of Tomorrow*. The Pilgrim Press, 1911.

¹¹ *Scientific Management in the Churches*, by Shailer Mathews, Dean of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. The University of Chicago Press, 1912.

gives more permanent form to a paper read by Professor Mathews at the Sagamore Sociological Conference of 1911, in which the principles of scientific management that make for greater efficiency in business are applied to the activities of the Church. In so far as the author calls attention to the superficial character of what passes for organization in many churches and to the resulting inefficiency, he renders a real service, and all must be grateful to him both for his analysis of existing conditions and for the remedies he proposes, by which the church is to become a "coöperating group of spiritual workmen." His conception should also help to make the calling of the ministry more inviting to those to whom administration, and concrete, measurable forms of service, especially appeal. It is unfortunate, however, that Professor Mathews is not wholly clear or consistent in the distinction which he makes between the minister and his education as they are assumed to be, and the education and the minister as he would have them. For example, every one will agree that ministers should be trained to become "leaders of men rather than merely exhorters of men," and that schools of divinity should send out men "trained in efficiency rather than merely informed as to orthodoxy." But when it is said that the "fundamental conception of the minister's education must be changed from that of a man with a message to that of a leader of a social group with a definitely religious and moral function," one is not so sure. The "man with a message" is very apt to become a leader of men, whether an exhorter or not, and whatever his orthodoxy or heterodoxy. In *The Educational Ideal in the Ministry*¹² President Faunce develops a conception of the minister which is as essential as it is timely. For in its fundamental idea, as he says, the church has anticipated in various ways the emphasis which our age lays on education as its "characteristic activity." But the chief educational work of the church, Dr. Faunce holds, can be done, not as it reaches a few "through formal schools and curricula," but only "in and through its regular services and functions." "If the aim of education is 'preparation for complete living,'

¹² *The Educational Ideal in the Ministry.* The Lyman Beecher Lectures at Yale University in the Year 1908, by William Herbert Perry Faunce, President of Brown University. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1908.

and the aim of the church is 'that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works,' then the church is fundamentally an educational institution, and the minister is in essence a teacher of his generation." Dr. Faunce discusses the questions suggested by this thesis, and the conclusions which follow, with characteristic insight, breadth, and judgment, and with the authority of an experience, both as parish minister and as educator, which has been peculiarly rich in opportunity for observation. The eight chapters or lectures are all full of suggestion and encouragement for the minister who is in earnest in his desire to justify his calling; but the concluding chapter, "The Education of the Minister by his Task," is peculiarly valuable in that it makes plain the challenge to intellectual and spiritual growth and to the development of originality in its best sense, which the ministry gives beyond any other calling. Incidentally the long pastorate is shown to be necessary, not only that the minister may attain the full strengthening and ripening of his powers, but also that the relation in which he stands to the church and the community may be assured "time for growth as well as for appeal."

It is suggestive that these books, representing various sympathies and methods, have one characteristic in common. All emphasize the personality of the preacher and the quality of that personality. The minister is to be first and always a man among men, and he is to be a spiritually-minded man. It is a good omen for the continued and increasing usefulness of the Christian ministry when those who enter it are thus reminded that, although changing times bring changed conditions, the one great essential of their calling is still the same, and that they are to come as their Master came, that men "may have life, and may have it abundantly."